REPRESENTATIONS—*concld.*

No. 131.—Non-participation by local officers of Government who are *ex-officio* members of local bodies in the election of Presidents and Vice-Presidents thereof.

Mr. B. C. NANJUNDIAH (Tumkur—Urban).

Mr. B C. NANJUNDIAH explained that under a Government Order issued in 1930, the privilege originally granted to officers, who were *ex-officio* members of local bodies, of voting in the election of presidents and vice-presidents had been withdrawn by the Government. Accordingly the said officers were not taking part in the elections held in subsequent years. But that order was rescinded in 1939, just a day prior to the election of the Municipal President at Tumkur. This enabled the Deputy Commissioner to put up a pro-government candidate for contesting the presidential seat and to give the candidate a guarantee that all the official vote would be recorded in his favour. Since then, there was a tendency on the part of officers to create a split among the electors, in connection practically with every election and organize a pro-government party as against those whom they dubbed as the anti-government party. The speaker was personally aware of such action on the part of Government officers in connection with the elections to the District Board of Tumkur in 1940, the interference having gone so far that the local medical officer was called upon to explain why he had not voted in favour of the Deputy Commissioner's nominee.

Mr. B. L. HUTCHE GOWDA and **Mr. H. HONNIAH** rose to a point of order and said that the member should not level charges against a responsible officer of Government who was not present in the House and therefore not in a position to defend himself.

The PRESIDENT cautioned the mover that he would have to hold himself responsible for the statements he was making and that if he could not substantiate them, they would amount to defamation of the officers concerned.

Mr. B. C. NANJUNDIAH said that as a resident of Tumkur he was aware of the case to which he was referring but that if the President so directed him, he would make statements in a general way. What he intended to convey was that the voting power vested in official members was detrimental not only to the progress of democratic institutions but also to the maintenance of cordiality between officials and non-officials. For this reason, he wanted that the officials should not vote in elections to local bodies.

Mr. S. C. MALLIAH said that he would have appreciated the arguments of the mover if he had suggested that officers should not be permitted to be members of local bodies. Instead of doing that, what he had proposed was merely to deprive the official members of the privilege of voting at elections of presidents and vice-presidents. Such an attitude seemed to him rather strange and self-contradictory. Local officers were closely connected with local activities in departments like Revenue, Education, Engineering, etc. They participated in all the meetings of the local bodies, expressing their opinions, offering their advice on points arising from time to time, and also exercising their votes. It was clear that without the help of those officers the deliberations of local bodies would not be complete or thorough. That was perhaps the reason why they were put in as members of these bodies Such being the case, to say that they might continue to be members but should not exercise the privilege of voting at elections of presidents and vice-presidents would be inconsistent. If it was true that in one case the officers had helped candidates of a particular school of thought, it was equally possible that officers in another case helped candidates of another school. So, granting that something went wrong somewhere, there was no justification for making a distinction between one member and another.

Mr. H. KRISHNAMURTHY ACHAR said that ever since the enactment of the Local Boards Act and the inauguration of the local self-government institutions, local officers were exercising the privilege of voting alongside of the non-official members. That practice had been deviated from only for a short

period. Since the mover had not objected to the power of voting being given to nominated non official members, there could be no point in suggesting that nominated official members should not enjoy the same privilege. He was of opinion that so long as local officers happened to be members of the local bodies, they should be recognised as being entitled to vote on an equal footing with other members. The existing practice gave them that recognition and was quite sound and reasonable. He therefore said that the same practice should continue in future also.

Mr. D. VENKATACHALAPATHY SETTY said that the local self-government institutions were organised in the State several years ago and that *ex-officio* members thereof were not enjoying the privilege of voting at elections for a long number of years. Even so recently as 1937, he knew, officers did not participate in the elections of presidents and vice-presidents of local bodies. With the growth of political consciousness on the part of the people of the State, this power came to be extended to officers also so that supporters of Government might form a majority in the body concerned. It might be argued that the nominated official and non-official members were free to cast their votes according to their own discretion, but the fact remained that they were invariably voting in a particular way in all cases.

Proceeding, the speaker said that in connection with the elections recently held under the reforms, the local officers had interfered with the elections and that any number of telegrams and petitions had been addressed to the Government relating to the same. He contended that the only object underlying the creation of *ex officio* membership was to provide local bodies with technical assistance and nothing beyond that. But unfortunately, instead of stopping at that, the Government went to the extent of altering the rules in 1939 and conferring on *ex-officio* members the privilege of voting even at elections of presidents and vice-presidents, so that only nominees of Government might get returned. As this had resulted in fettering the discretion of local self-government institutions, he supported the representation.

Mr. H. HONNAIYA said that every member had an inherent right to vote and no one should be denied that right. If the present request was granted, the next step might be to deprive even nominated non-official members of the right to vote.

Mr. M. SUBBIAH explained that under the Municipalities Act as well as the District Boards Act, a maximum limit had been prescribed for membership of the local bodies. Including the President the maximum strength of a municipal council was fixed at 20. Whether official or non-official, each one was a regular member of the organisation, and to say that particular members should not have the power to vote would be opposed to the spirit of the Act.

The MINISTER for LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT and PUBLIC HEALTH (Mr. H. B. Gundappa Gowda) observed that it was clear from the discussion on the subject that there was a wide difference of opinion, among the members themselves, on the point in question and that it was not a simple matter on which a decision could be arrived at. It was contended by the mover and his supporters that officials nominated as members of local bodies should be precluded from voting at elections. It was argued that Government had changed the original rule in 1939 for certain political reasons and conferred the power of voting on official members. In reply to that, **the MINISTER** assured the House that it was not so and drew the attention of the members that in the year 1930, the privilege of voting had been taken away from official members of local bodies, and it could not be seriously urged that there was any political reason underlying that change. Similarly, for revoking that order in 1939, he averred that there was no kind of political reason.

Proceeding, he said that he was not convinced about the soundness of the argument that official members should not be permitted to vote at elections. If those members could exercise the privilege of voting at all meetings convened for transacting business of the

local body, he failed to see why they should be precluded from voting in connection with one particular item of business, *viz.*, elections. The object of Government in nominating them as members was to afford them full scope to help the local self-governing bodies not only by expressing their opinions but also by voting in respect of all matters coming for discussion and not to sit there with folded hands especially when a most vital item of business, *viz.*, elections, was being transacted; and as such, they did not wish to fetter the discretion of such members in any way. Moreover, Government were nominating not only officials but also non-officials as members to these bodies. While no objection had been taken by anybody to the latter being permitted to exercise their votes, he wondered why there should be any opposition to the former class of members—who, after all, could not be more than a few in any case—enjoying the privilege. Official members, he said, were as much entitled to the privileges as the elected and nominated members. So long as the maximum strength of these bodies had been prescribed by statute, he felt that it was but right that every member enjoyed equal rights and that it would not be desirable to make any invidious distinction as between one member and another so far as the privilege of voting was concerned.

For these reasons, he said, Government regretted that the request could not be complied with.

No.138.—Abolition of fines for converting revenue lands into building sites.

Mr. B. BASAVALINGIAH (Kadur—Rural).

Mr. B. BASAVALINGIAH explained that in villages, if agricultural lands were to be converted into building sites, 25 years' assessment had to be deposited by the parties concerned before such conversion could be effected. In addition to that, the Government were also levying a conversion fine on acreage basis. The rates of fine varied from Rs. 100 to Rs. 400 an acre. While there could be no objection to the recovery of 25 years' assessment in such cases, the levy of the conversion fine was an unnecessary hardship on the poor villagers. He therefore prayed that the conversion fine be abolished.

Mr. A. N. RAMA RAO remarked that the subject-matter of the representation was not quite clear to him. He enquired whether it referred even to acquisitio of agricultural lands by Government, for example, for village extension purposes, and if so, whether it was correct to say that Government were recovering 25 years' assessment from the raiyats in such cases.

Mr. B. BASAVALINGIAH replied that it referred only to appropriations of agricultural lands by raiyats for building purposes and that he was aware that in cases of acquisitions by Government, the question of recovery of assessment or fine would not arise.

Patel SIDDE GOWDA supported the representation.

Another MEMBER brought to notice that he had known cases where so much as 50 years' assessment had been recovered in the case of conversions of the kind referred to.

Mr. S. N. M. RAZVI pointed out that in several villages houses had been built in insanitary places and if people wished to shift their abode to healthier places and build upon their own agricultural lands, it would not be right for the Government to impose a conversion fine. On the other hand, it was the duty of Government to help the villagers to settle down in healthy localities. He therefore strongly supported the request for the abolition of the conversion fine.

Mr. SHAIK AHMED SAHIB explained that according to the existing practice, no conversion fine need be paid for building farm-houses if the permission of the local officers was secured. But in respect of conversion of agricultural lands in close proximity to villages, in addition to 25 years' assessment, fines up to a maximum of Rs. 2,000 per acre were being recovered for the reason that if the municipality itself acquired such lands and sold them as house-sites, it could make large profits. But as a matter of fact, in such cases permission to convert was not being given at all even on payment of conversion fine. Thus,

there was real hardship and the member therefore prayed that the request contained in the representation might be granted.

Mr. M. ABDUL RASOOL also supported the above speaker.

Mr. JATHARE NAIK represented that the people of his (Banajara) community were put to great difficulties on account of levy of conversion fines.

The MINISTER for REVENUE and FINANCE (Rajamantrapravina K. V. Anantaraman) explained that this question had once before been discussed in the Assembly and that thereafter the matter had been examined in detail by Government and a Government Order was passed in December 1940. According to that order a sum equivalent to 25 years' assessment was to be paid for the new right which the parties acquired by virtue of the conversion. Where agricultural lands were appropriated for building purposes in municipalities, the owners were realising very good prices for their lands and Government were entitled to a share of this. There was no reason why the conversion fine should be waived in those cases. The municipalities also were ordinarily earning large profits by acquiring and selling agricultural lands as building sites. There was nothing wrong in Government also claiming a share of such profits. But in the case of smaller municipalities and village panchayats which were unable to pay the conversion fine, it was the policy of Government to waive the fine on the recommendation of the local officers.

Proceeding, **Mr. K. V. ANANTARAMAN** explained that another concession was also provided for in the Government Order already referred to. When an agricultural land was appropriated for building purposes, in lieu of the land revenue that was being paid previously, a special assessment would be levied under the rules. But it was difficult, in the case of small plots to collect the special assessment. In such cases, the special assessment was excused. In these circumstances, he observed that no further modification of the existing rules was called for.

No. 160.—Waiving the establishment, tools and plant charges on Local Bodies.

Mr. A. SRIKANTIAH (Arkalgud—Rural).

Mr. A. SRIKANTIAH prayed that establishment, tools and plant charges charged on local bodies on materials got from outside might be waived and the same charged only on the labour portion of the scheme. He stated that in the case of works executed by the Department of Public Works or the Sanitary Department on behalf of local bodies, it was customary to debit to the works account a sum equivalent to 12½ per cent of the estimated cost on account of establishment and tools and plant charges. This was resulting in unnecessary expenditure to the local bodies, and he therefore requested that such debit be made in future only in respect of the actual labour portion of the estimate. With regard to the rest of the items in the estimate such as materials including machinery imported from outside or purchased by the Stores Purchase Committee from approved firms, there could be no justification in charging either establishment charges or tools and plant charges because the Department would have nothing to supervise in respect of such items. If this request could not be sanctioned for any reason, he suggested that the debit be at least reduced to 5 per cent on the entire estimate. Many local bodies had approached the Government in this respect already, but so far the Government had not considered their requests sympathetically.

Mr. S. C. SURYANARAYANA CHETTY supported the representation.

Mr. K. VENKATARAMIAH explained that the representation had reference to original works. He was glad that in many cases, on representations made by certain municipalities that they could not afford to pay the charges at the stipulated rates, Government had been pleased to reduce the levy to 7 per cent. But he was sorry to say that even in respect of annual maintenance of works like water works, etc., tools and plant charges were levied at the full stipulated rate. Most municipalities were not in a position to meet such charges, so that

without any distinction being made by the Government as at present, as between the smaller and the bigger municipalities, the Government should kindly waive the levy in all cases. In this connection, he brought to notice that items like oil, etc., could as well be got supplied by local contractors if only a slight profit was given. In cases of that kind also there could be no justification for charging as much as 12½ per cent. From this point of view, the department was, in the speaker's opinion, worse than merchants. Several local bodies were unable to meet even the actual cost of the works so that their difficulties would only be aggravated by the levy of the charges in question. It was as a result of such levies that the amounts due to Government on account of works executed were falling into arrear and remaining unpaid for long periods.

Mr. K. CHENGALARAYA REDDY said that when he saw the representation in print he had thought that the charges referred to were being levied only on the labour portion of the estimates, but he was surprised to hear from the mover that the levy was being made even in respect of materials purchased in the market. He really wondered, even now whether the complaint could be true at all.

The SECRETARY to GOVERNMENT, FINANCIAL DEPARTMENT (Rajasevaprasakta A. N. Raghavachar) explained that tools and plant charges really meant charges of supervision. They were charges usually levied in the case of all public works. He instanced the case of works executed by the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway Company on behalf of Mysore Railway, in which the latter was paying such charges to the former. But the said charges were not levied on that part of the estimates which related to establishment charges. As regards establishment charges themselves he hoped that nobody would grudge paying them because it was merely a question of services rendered by one agency on behalf of another agency, body or department. If the establishment maintained by the Department of Public Works was asked to execute a work putting in so much of time and energy, it was but right that the local body on behalf of which the work was executed paid for such work If the representation before the House was conceded, it would only mean a transference of the liability from the party benefited by the work to the Government which employed the agency that executed the work. Nobody, he hoped, would support such a transference. If at all, the charge levied could be reduced so as to cover only the cost of the establishment actually employed on the particular work concerned.

Proceeding, he said that in respect of similar works executed in British India, the Auditor-General had recommended that local bodies might be given some extra grant so that the charges referred to might not weigh too heavily on them, if it was considered that the ordinary percentage was unfair. But so far as local bodies in Mysore were concerned, the speaker said that the question might be examined as to how far the levy might be reduced from 12½ to a lower percentage.

He concluded with the observation that the levy referred to was being made only as a matter of general procedure and that if relief was needed in respect of any particular municipalities, it could be given in the shape of a grant as was suggested to the Government of India by the Auditor-General.

Mr. N. RAMA RAO said that the particular form of relief to be granted was not very material. All that the representation sought to secure was that the present high rate of 12½ per cent should be reduced. Nobody would suggest that any department of Government should render service free of all charges. As the Financial Secretary had rightly observed, nobody would say that the liability should be transferred from the benefiting local body to Government themselves. As a matter of fact, even 12½ per cent might be levied, but only on items of work actually done. But for facility of calculation it might be better to agree that 5 per cent be charged on the entire estimate.

The PRESIDENT asked the mover of the representation to clarify the

point which he was trying to make, namely, whether it was that the percentage should be reduced and calculated on the entire amount, or that the existing rate of levy should continue provided it applied to particular items included in the estimate.

Mr. A. SRIKANTIAH explained that his representation in the main was that no levy should be made with respect to machinery and materials purchased, but that he would be glad if the percentage was also reduced if possible to 5 per cent and charged on the labour portion of the estimate only.

The MINISTER for REVENUE and FINANCE (Rajamantrapravina K. V. Anantaraman) replied that the question would be examined by Government.

Nawab SHER KHAN requested that all religious and charitable institutions be given the benefit of this representation.

Rao Bahadur M. RAMASWAMY requested that Government should recover from the local bodies concerned, only the charges actually incurred by the Department executing the work. In this connection, he brought to notice that even in respect of conveyance charges, etc., which were met by the local bodies directly, tools and plant charges were being calculated, which was very unfair.

The PRESIDENT promised that the question would be examined in all its aspects. He, however, added that whether it was the Public Works Department or the Sanitary Department that happened to execute a work on behalf of a local body, the point to be borne in mind was that the concerned department would naturally maintain an establishment just sufficient for carrying out its own works and that when that establishment was asked to take up extra work on behalf of a local body, the expenditure of the departmental staff would have to be met, in reason, by such local body. The establishment and tools and plant charges were being levied in accordance with a known financial formula, and not on any scientific basis. And, as already explained by the Financial Secretary, if outside agencies did any work for Government, it was similarly paid for by Government. But even in levying the charges under reference, the departments were excluding certain tated items and charging lower rates in respect of muzrai works, etc., so that the nett receipts under the head would hardly suffice to meet even the actual expenditure. Still, in view of the difficulties brought to notice, Government would examine the question again and pass such orders as might be called for.

Mr. Khaji SYED YUSUF SAHIB enquired whether the rate of 12½ per cent was merely an arbitrary figure or had been fixed with reference to any definite data.

The PRESIDENT replied that the rate had been fixed on the basis of what exactly should be charged in order that the actual expenses of the department might at least be recovered.

No. 167.—Construction of a bridge across the Arkavathi near Kankanhalli.

Mr. D. VENKATACHALAPATHY SETTY (Kankanhalli—Urban).

Mr. D. VENKATACHALAPATHY SETTY represented that great inconvenience was caused to men and cattle that passed along the Bangalore-Mysore Road near Kankanhalli due to want of a bridge across the Arkavathi river. This fact was being represented to the Government for the past 50 years but to no effect. He therefore prayed that the construction of the bridge be taken up during the current year alone. He added that in reply to a question put at the previous session, Government had stated that a bridge would be constructed very soon, but it was not known whether any action in that direction had so far been taken. He also added that if this request was granted, motor and bus traffic would be greatly helped. The taluk enjoyed no special facilities of any kind and the residents thereof would be satisfied if at least this particular facility was created for them.

Mr. S. I. MUMTAZ supported the representation.

Mr. H. M. GURUSWAMI GOWDA stated that this question had come up for consideration before the District Board and that the work in question

was estimated to cost about Rs. 1,20,000. The proposal before the Board was that a local cess should be levied with a view to meeting the cost. But the consensus of opinion was that for providing a bridge in one particular place, all the tax-payers in the district should not be made to bear extra taxation. After all, the bridge was expected to be helpful to traffic between only three taluks, *viz.*, Closepet, Channapatna and Kankanhalli. For this reason, many members had not supported the proposal which was ultimately carried not by a majority but with the help of the casting vote of the President.

Mr. V. VENKATAPPA reminded the House that this question was agitating the minds of the people of the taluks mentioned above since the year 1917 and argued that the very fact that they were ceaselessly agitating for the bridge in question was itself an indication of its importance and necessity. He added that people of Kankanhalli in particular were experiencing considerable difficulty for want of the bridge. He narrated how funds were not available for executing the work according to estimates originally prepared, how the District Board was in favour of taking up the work, how the Government were particular that the people concerned should contribute a portion of the cost, how they had agreed to make the contribution, how the Government had ordered that the scheme might be held over, how the District Board had thereupon offered to bear the entire cost and how in spite of it the Government had not approved of the proposal. He observed that it was very difficult for one to know what exactly was the attitude of the Government in respect of such works and how far they were in favour of providing facilities about which the tax-payers were particular. He requested that Government be pleased to sanction the work at least now so that the concerned people might not continue to experience the difficulties complained of.

Mr. H. HONNIAH also supported the representation.

The SECRETARY to GOVERNMENT, PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT (Mr. M. G. Mehkri) stated that this question had been coming up before the Representative Assembly and the Legislative Council ever since the bridge at Halagur was constructed. Government he said, were convinced that a bridge near Kankanhalli was a real necessity. A revised estimate amounting to Rs. 1,27,000 had recently been received and the District Board of Bangalore were reported to be prepared to meet the entire cost and take up the work. But the difficulty was that the District Board had no funds of their own and Government had therefore been requested to grant a loan to the required extent. Government, no doubt, might think of sanctioning that loan provided the District Board devised ways and means of repaying it. This was how the question of levying a cess had arisen, and subject to the same being done, the proposals before Government might be sanctioned.

No. 168.—Construction of a bridge across the Vararda River near Gondi in Sorab Taluk.

Mr. GURUNATHA KRISHNA NADIGAR (Nominated).

Mr. GURUNATHA KRISHNA NADIGAR represented that the question of constructing a bridge across the river Varada near Gondi, where the frontier boundaries of the Mysore State and the Bombay Presidency met on the Sorab Taluk border, was being pressed on the attention of the Government for a long time past, and was said to have been included in the inter-provincial bridge programme. In view of the heavy traffic and levy of frontier toll on this road which formed an easy and straight inter-provincial communication, he prayed that this work might kindly be taken up early. He added that about 36 villages of the Mysore State on the other side would be cut off from the rest of the State for about 6 months in the year owing to floods in the river. This was why the question had been coming up for consideration for several years past at taluk and district conferences and elsewhere. The Dewan and the Minster for Revenue and Finance had personally seen the area in question and were convinced about the merits of the representation. The member added that a deputation from

Shimoga had recently waited on the Dewan and pressed the need for taking up the bridge work. When the Congress Ministry was in office only recently, one of the Congress leaders from the Bombay Presidency, the Hon. Mr. Morarjee Desai, M. L. C., visited the place and the speaker had discussed this question with him. The Congress representative had promised to tell his party and members of the Ministry referred to that it was necessary to take up the work.

The speaker went on to explain the desirability of taking up the work from the point of view of close contact between Mysore and Bombay. Sorab and Shikarpur were frontier taluks, and the bulk of jaggery, paddy, etc., produced in those taluks would have to find a sale in the bordering taluks of the Bombay Presidency, and for that purpose the producers had necessarily to make use of the road in question. No doubt, there was a provincial toll-gate on the Sorab Taluk border, but the necessary facilities for traffic were lacking. He therefore appealed to Government to consider this representation with special sympathy.

Mr. B. ANANDA RAO supported the representation. He added that people from Shimoga and Sorab taluks desirous of going to Dharwar had formerly to cross two rivers, *viz.*, Dandavati and Varada but Government had been pleased to construct a bridge across the former and removed much of the difficulty experienced by them. But the difficulty continued to exist on account of the other river and the people would be grateful if Government were pleased to construct the bridge now under reference.

The SECRETARY to GOVERNMENT, PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT (Mr. M. G. Mehkri) explained that Government were aware that the residents of the villages in question would be very much helped if the bridge asked for was constructed. But the place called Gondi was not part of the Mysore State as stated in the representation but of the Bombay Presidency. So the approval of the Bombay Government would be necessary for taking up the work. And as the bridge would be helpful to people of that Presidency also, the Bombay Government would have to bear half of the cost involved. The Government of Mysore had already taken into consideration once before, the question of constructing a bridge at another place called Banavasi, but the Government of Bombay had pleaded inability to share the cost and so the scheme had to be given up. They would again be addressed in connection with the bridge now under reference, and if they agreed, the work would be taken up as soon as practicable.

No. 193.—Reinstatement of Mr. Y. Ramaswamy in service.

Mr. Bhupalam R. CHANDRASEKHARAYYA (Trade and Commerce).

Mr. Bhupalam R. CHANDRASEKHARAYYA prayed that Mr. Y. Ramaswamy, Engineer in charge of the Jog Electrical Works, be reinstated in service and paid salary up to date and enabled to continue in service for the remaining period he was entitled to serve under the rules.

He said that the case of Mr. Y. Ramaswamy was coming up before the Assembly for nearly 3 years past. So that it was unnecessary to explain who that gentleman was and what reasons exactly were behind the present representation. In the Budget Session of 1939 one member, Mr. K. Lakshminarayana Rao, asked whether Mr. Y. Ramaswamy as Engineer in charge of the Electrical portion of the Jog scheme, had submitted any suggestions about the site at which the dam should be built, and the Government gave the reply that he had not submitted any through the proper channel. In reply to a subsequent question put by the same member, Government stated that as Mr. Ramaswamy had not made his proposals through the proper channel, they were put into the waste paper basket. In the October Session of the same year, the same member asked whether Mr. Ramaswamy had been given a personal hearing before his recommendations were rejected, and to that the reply of Government was that instead of relying upon an individual's opinion, the whole thing would be

scrutinized by an expert committee, and their recommendations accepted. Another question then put was whether the expert committee would consult Mr. Y. Ramaswamy at least in future, and it was stated in reply that anybody was free to send up suggestions to them. Finally, in reply to a question put by the present speaker, it was stated that the scheme prepared by that gentleman was fully considered on its merits.

The member explained that his object in referring to all those questions and answers was to show that the relations between Mr. Y. Ramswamy and the Chief Electrical Engineer had become strained for some time, that the former's suggestions were for that reason not well received by the latter, and that the former's services also had since been dispensed with for the self-same reason. The speaker accepted that with matters pertaining to the internal working of the Departments of Government, members of the Assembly should not interfere. But all the same, this particular question was agitating the minds of a large section of the House and that therefore the Government must as a special case allow them some latitude to discuss the question.

He then proceeded to narrate some of the main features of the scheme as prepared by Mr. Y. Ramaswamy with particular reference to the location of the generating station and which of the alternative pipe-lines would be cheaper, etc., and stated that these were the points over which differences of opinion arose between the two officers mentioned above, culminating in the termination of Mr. Y. Ramaswamy's services.

But now, according to the speaker's information, the suggestions made by that gentleman had been adopted and so he urged that the gentleman should be reinstated as Executive Engineer in charge of the Electrical portion of the scheme. Even granting that the termination of his services had been decided upon as a disciplinary measure, the speaker appealed to Government that they should generously reinstate him.

It might be argued, he proceeded to say, that the place now selected finally had been thought of so early as in 1928 and that Mr. Y. Ramaswamy could not take the credit for the selection As a matter of fact, an answer to this effect had been given by Government in another connection, but that, in his opinion, would not be correct, because he knew that it was the genius of Mr. Y. Ramaswamy that had hit upon the place for the water-way. The earlier selection in respect of the water-way, he said, made by Government in 1928, was only in respect of the Srinivasahalli pipe-line. The selection made by Mr. Y. Ramaswamy would make for no small economy, and credit therefor ought to be given, in all fairness, to Mr. Y. Ramaswamy. In case, any honest doubt still existed on this point, he would appeal even now, to the Dewan-President, to the Chief Engineer and to Mr. Forbes who was then the Chief Electrical Engineer and the present Electrical Adviser to Government to send for Mr. Y. Ramaswamy and investigate the point. At least after that if the Government were going to be convinced that Mr. Y. Ramaswamy was the author of the idea, which was calculated to save so much as Rs. 70 lakhs to Government, the speaker hoped that they would no longer leave such an intelligent and patriotic officer in the lurch. The speaker would not recommend any separate judge for carrying on that investigation. He was confident that the Dewan-President was prepared to carry it on and arrive at a decision. In making the suggestion that a fresh investigation be held, the only object of the speaker was that nobody in the State should have reason to feel that the genius of any officer went unhonoured. Such a feeling would not do good to the State. He therefore hoped that the representation would be considered by Government with an especial measure of sympathy.

Mr. Khaji SYED YUSUF SAHIB was inclined to feel, after hearing what the mover had just now stated, that Mr. Y. Ramaswamy was a victim of Mr. Forbes. Was an officer, he asked, who had saved Rs. 70 lakhs to the State, to suffer simply because he was an Indian? For reasons of discipline, he had already suffered enough. But,

being not inefficient, he should not be made to suffer any longer. For this reason, the speaker suggested that the Dewan, the Minister in charge and Mr. Forbes should meet together and discuss the question in all its aspects. If it was decided that the proposals formulated by Mr. Y. Ramaswamy had been found acceptable and had been adopted, that officer should be re-entertained in service. Even granting that parts of the scheme such as, G2 bed as adopted, had been suggested by Mr. Forbes, yet it was necessary to consider who was responsible for suggesting sites for the pipe-line, for the G2 forebay and for the penstock, as these were the more important parts of the scheme. According to information which the speaker had, these were all suggested by Mr. Y. Ramaswamy himself, and it would not be fair to give the credit therefor to Mr. Forbes. Thus the representation appeared very reasonable and modest. He had therefore great pleasure in supporting it.

Mr. M. N. JOIS prefaced his remarks with the assurance that he was not personally interested in the officer mentioned in the representation. If this representation which related to one individual officer of Government was brought forward before the House, it was because certain members were sincerely of opinion that he was responsible for a good part of the scheme which would save lakhs of rupees for the State. So far as the speaker was aware, the scheme under reference was being contemplated by Government since the year 1920. Since then many preliminary investigations had been held. In 1920-21 Government got several sites examined in Arebyle and some other places, for the location of the power station, the canal, the forebay, and the penstock line. In particular, the canal, the forebay, the penstock and the generating station, were the four most important parts of any electrical scheme. The site for the generating station had been fixed in the year 1920-21 under the personal supervision of Mr. Forbes. The investigations relating to other sites were spread over a period of over 20 years or more, but none of the sites proposed was found to be suitable. After all, Mr. Y. Ramaswamy selected a site which in the opinion of many experts was quite suitable.

The PRESIDENT asked whether the speaker was sure of the accuracy of the statement that he was making.

Mr. M. N. JOIS said that that was his information, but in case it was wrong, the Government were certainly free to correct him. And now, he gathered, the generating station was to be located at the very site that had been selected in 1920-21. But throughout these investigations it was believed that the total cost of the scheme would be about 180 lakhs, but because alternative schemes were accepted and Mr. Y. Ramaswamy's proposals were ignored, the same scheme was now expected to cost, according to the present estimates, about Rs. 280 or Rs. 283 lakhs. This might be due partly to war conditions, but the fact remained that the alternative scheme involved a net loss of about Rs. 100 lakhs to the Government. The question naturally arose as to who should be held responsible for such a huge loss.

The PRESIDENT observed that without the aid of accurate information, the member was making statements and enunciating theories.

Mr. M. N. JOIS replied that as already stated he was open to correction.

The PRESIDENT observed that it would not do for a member to go on making erroneous statements and say that he was open to correction. It would be well if he stated only what he knew to be correct.

Mr. M. N. JOIS stated that all that he was submitting was information which he believed to be correct.

The PRESIDENT remarked that the number of statements requiring to be corrected appeared to be large enough.

Mr. M. N. JOIS said that the only point which he had so far tried to make out was that if only the scheme had been the same, probably the State would have saved a large sum of money.

The PRESIDENT expressed the wish that the war had broken out a few years later.

Mr. M. N. JOIS said that if the extra cost was assuredly due to war conditions only, he would leave the point at that.

The PRESIDENT assured the member that it was so. He added that the information which Mr. Jois was giving was quite incorrect.

Mr. M. N. JOIS then proceeded to say that Mr. Y. Ramaswamy had been responsible for the scheme in question. He added that he was in possession of certain facts and figures to show that it was so. One such fact was that the Department of Geology had conducted one of the preliminary surveys connected with this scheme, at its very early stages and that in the report relating to that survey, mention was made that the particular site had been suggested by Mr. Y. Ramaswamy. If that was so, the conclusion was irresistible that that officer alone was entitled to the credit for the selection of sites for the forebay, the penstock and the canal. And even if he had played no more part in connection with the scheme, he should be considered as having rendered yeoman service to the State. Personally he rejoiced to find in Mr. Y. Ramaswamy, a Mysorean who was capable of such meritorious work. From this point of view the speaker was very sorry to remark that the treatment meted out to Mr. Y. Ramaswamy, *viz.*, compulsory retirement, was anything but fair.

The PRESIDENT told the member that the punishment referred to had nothing to do with the question under reference.

Mr. M. N. JOIS said that he was not particular about the exact reasons that had led to Mr. Y. Ramaswamy's retirement. It was his purpose to urge on the attention of Government that even if something was wrong with him it should have been condoned in view of his yeoman services to the State. And because that had not been done, the speaker would agree with the suggestion of Mr. Bhupalam Chandrasekharayya that a committee be appointed to consider the case afresh on merits. The House would be thoroughly satisfied if that was done, and it lay with the Government to give it that satisfaction.

Mr. N. RAMA RAO stated that he was not personally aware of the merits of the case in question. He however took it that the only purpose of this representation was that a person who was entitled to generous recognition at the hands of the Government had really been treated unfairly and that even now the Government should extend recognition to him That also appeared to be the opinion of many members of the House. The speaker was personally acquainted with Mr. Y. Ramaswamy as he was sure the Dewan-President also was. That gentleman, he said, was a very able and competent man. It was therefore a matter of no small pride and satisfaction to him to be told by members of the House that that gentleman had saved so many lakhs of rupees for the State. If that was so, the representation before the House was indeed very modest. One or two members who thought that grave injustice had been done to Mr. Y. Ramaswamy had requested that the Dewan-President himself might investigate the matter and re-consider the case if re-consideration was called for. That was not a difficult task. But why the members requested the Government to appoint a committee to carry on the investigation, was that Mr. Y. Ramaswamy, after all, was the members' own countryman and if, instead of being rewarded for good work, he was punished, they were bound to be dissatisfied. If his services were duly recognised, he would have the inducement to serve the State still better in the years to come. It would be no wonder if even 20 crores of rupees were going to be saved for the State if all the patriots were recognised and honoured. He therefore had pleasure in supporting the request for the appointment of a committee as proposed.

The SECRETARY to GOVERNMENT, PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT (Mr. M. G. Mehkri) replied to the debate on behalf of Government. He observed at the outset that this representation appeared to have been based on a one-sided version of the matter under reference. He therefore wished to clear all misapprehensions by saying straightaway that there were three

sites in question in connection with the Jog Scheme, and that G2 site had been selected long ago by Mr. B. Krishna Rao. The first of those sites was inspected and found to be of little use to the scheme under contemplation. After the Hydro-Electric Committee was appointed, Mr. Forbes himself selected an alternative site G S.F.S. But a still better site known as the "AB site" was selected by Mr.Winckler. These were also inspected by the said committee as well as by the Geological Department. The committee decided that the AB site was of no use, that the G.S.F.S. was not desirable and that Government should not risk a huge amount by depending on such sites. Subsequently a meeting of the committee was held at Jog itself and Mr. Y. Ramaswamy who was also present, pressed the suggestion which he had made in the past. The committee heard him patiently and promised full consideration. At the same time the Geological Department referred to one other site and promised to examine and report as to which of them would be suited for the purpose. The Hydro-Electric Committee also examined them and recommended what was known as the G2 site which was on the left bank of the Sirur Halla because it was the nearest for the generating station.

Some members had stated that the sites for the location of the Forebay, penstock, etc., had all been selected by Mr. Y. Ramaswamy. The speaker was in a position to contradict that statement most definitely and unhesitatingly. He had in hand, at the moment, the very plan which had been prepared by Mr. Y. Ramaswamy and no one who had a look at it would fail to be convinced at once that the site selected by Mr. Y. Ramaswamy was certainly not the site where work was actually going on at present. The one which was at Seethakatte was altogether different from the other which was at Hirebhaskar. Every one of the suggestions made by that officer had been thoroughly examined, but not one of them had been found to be of any use.

With regard to the question of saving, the speaker stated that an expenditure of Rs. 280 lakhs had been sanctioned for the scheme, but the Hydro-Electric Committee were examining closely and constantly, how far savings could be effected in the course of actual working. He was perfectly satisfied that the committee were exercising the utmost possible economy. As a matter of fact they had a special sub-committee of their own for economising expenditure. When so many measures had been taken to economise expenditure, it was incredible that some other alternative scheme would have reduced the expenditure by 75 lakhs or 100 lakhs of rupees. There was not a single reference anywhere in the records relating to the Jog Scheme, on which such a statement could be based. If any member should still have any doubt on this point, he had only to go to the spot and make enquiries of his own. Whether on the question of jungle clearance, or that of diversion of the channel, or any other part of the work, Mr. Y. Ramaswamy had made no suggestions, nor funished any data, on which a claim of the sort now put up, could be based. All that he had done was to take a topo-sheet, draw a line somewhere, and say that Rs. 30 lakhs could be saved if that line was accepted, and to draw another line and say that the scheme of Mr. Forbes would cost Rs. 40 lakhs more. Could any sane administration be asked to take up schemes on data of that kind? If Mr. Y. Ramaswamy had rendered yeoman service, Government would certainly honour him, not only Government but every member belonging thereto. And even granting for the sake of argument that Government did not do so, at least individual officers were bound to know that a particular officer had rendered a particular service. The Hydro-Electric Committee referred to consisted in addition to the present speaker, such able officers like Messrs. M. G. Rangiah, K. R. Seshachar and S. Srinivasa Iyer (retired Chief Engineers), Mr. M. Venkatanaranappa, (Secretary, Development Department), the General Superintendent of the Works in question, and the Superintending Engineer of the Irrigation Circle. So, even granting that Government failed

to recognise Mr. Y. Ramaswamy's services, could it be seriously contended that all the experienced engineers who constituted the committee referred to had based their decisions and recommendations on wrong data?

It was all very easy to make wild allegations and spread false reports. If Mr. Y. Ramaswamy could establish with reference to facts and figures, that his proposals would cost less and others would cost more, even now the former would be accepted. No separate technical committee was necessary for ascertaining the truth. Any member of the House was free to go to the speaker's office and find out the truth for himself. The plans relating to the works were readily available. Mr. Y. Ramaswamy's plan was also readily available. By having a look at them and, if necessary, into the relevant papers, any one could understand the truth. Mr. Y. Ramaswamy, for example, had suggested for the same cost a site that was quite close to the Falls. Now, if the *anecut* was constructed adjacent to the Falls and if some day a few of the boulders slipped, would the *anecut* remain intact? Similarly, he wanted to construct the barrage, quite close to the Falls and he wanted the power channel just behind the bungalow. Further, if that was accepted and some time the bungalow was washed off, who would have to compensate for it? Questions like these could be appreciated and answered not necessarily by a technical committee but by any layman. Again, he wanted the canal to be taken behind the hillock. If that had been done some other serious consequences would have followed.

Having said all this, **Mr. M. G. MEHKRI** reminded the House of what the Dewan-President had already stated, *viz.*, that the retirement of Mr. Y. Ramaswamy had nothing to do with the Jog Scheme. That as a matter of fact had never influenced the decision of the Government. That decision was taken for other valid reasons which existed even prior to the consideration of the Jog Scheme.

Mr. Khaji SYED YUSUF SAHIB said that if that was so, he for one would not press the representation.

Mr. K. HANUMANTHIAH wished to know what those prior and valid reasons were.

Mr. M. G. MEHKRI thought that the question was better not re-opened.

Mr. Bhupalam R. CHANDRASEKHARAYYA said that the reply of the Secretary to Government was not convincing. He said that the Director of Geology had clearly stated in his report that the site that had been ultimately selected was first suggested by Mr. Y. Ramaswamy and that it was actually shown to the Director by that gentleman. He therefore asked whether the Secretary could make the Director's report available for reference on the present occasion. The Secretary had been good enough to promise to show the maps to members who might be interested in seeing them. But they could not be fully appreciated without the Director's report. He would, therefore, be glad if that report also was made available for reference.

As regards the merits of the case, he said that to the best of his information and belief the proposals made by Mr. Forbes for the "GSF" station provided for a continuous penstock length of 8,000 feet, whereas Mr. Y. Ramaswamy proposed construction of 5 rows of penstocks of 2,200 feet each and that the latter proposal alone would have resulted in a savings of Ks. 50 or Rs. 60 lakhs. There was a remarkable degree of genius in that officer as anybody could see. When facts and figures could be cited by laymen, why, he asked, should Government hesitate at least to investigate into the case. After all, what the House wanted was that justice should be done. It was far from their intention to take sides. But they would like the Secretary to make a full reply, with reference to the Geological Director's report also.

In conclusion he said that the Secretary was good enough to name all the members of the Hydro-Electric Committee, but for reasons best known to him, omitted to mention the name of the Director of Geology. That officer had visited the spot three or four times and bestowed considerable time and attention on this question. It was a

thousand pities that such an officer was not included in that committee.

The PRESIDENT thought that the Public Works Secretary had made a sufficiently full statement by way of reply to the discussion on the representation and that it was not necessary for him to go into further details. There was, however, one point which he would like to mention, *viz.*, that it was not desirable that personal questions relating to individual officers of Government should be canvassed on the floor of the House, though the particular question had been allowed to be discussed for the reason that a certain amount of misapprehension seemed to exist in the minds of some members that an officer of special ability had not been treated well by Government.

The question having now been discussed, the members had been enabled to know some of the facts relating to the matter though they could not have understood their full significance. So far as Government were concerned, they fully agreed that meritorious services should not go unrewarded. But in the case under reference, unfortunately, no such services had been rendered and no stroke of genius had come to notice.

With regard to the actual working of the scheme itself, he assured the House that everything was being done in accordance with the usual procedure prescribed for such works and with all the care and caution that was demanded by such matters. Big decisions, it was needless to say, were not going to be taken all at once without taking the opinions of as many experts as possible.

In conclusion he hoped that members would not go away with the impression that there was any irrefutable basis for all that had been alleged in the course of the debate. No doubt, if in any case, genius had remained unrecognized or if injustice had been done where reward should have been given, Government were certainly prepared to reconsider the case and revise their own orders. But so far as the particular case was concerned, there was nothing of that kind and perhaps members would themselves have realised by now that there was hardly any need for them to defend the concerned officer at such length.

Mr. Bhupalam R. CHANDRASEKHARAYYA interjected that members held a contrary opinion.

Mr. MIRZA AZEEZULLA BEIG said that at first he was inclined to support the representation but he now felt that there was a lot of misrepresentation of facts.

Mr. Bhupalam R. CHANDRASEKHARYYA protested against this expression and urged that, being unparliamentary the same should be withdrawn.

Mr. MIRZA AZEEZULLA BEIG said that if what he had stated was considered unparliamentary he would withdraw the same.

Mr. PRESIDENT observed that, after Government had given their reply to a representation, any further remarks in the same connection would be clearly out of place.

No. 194.—Appointment of a committee to enquire into the causes of suicide committed by Mr. P. V. K. Murthy.

Mr. RAGHUNATHA RAO (Srinivaspur—Rural).

Mr. RAGHUNATHA RAO prayed that a committee be immediately appointed to enquire into and report on the causes that led to the suicide of the late Mr. P. V. K. Murthy, an officer of the Electrical Department.

Mr. A. N. RAMA RAO said that this question had been discussed in different shapes on three or four days already and it was therefore unnecessary to devote any more time in the present connection.

The PRESIDENT said that if possible this representation also might be discussed within a few minutes.

Mr. K. CHENGALARAYA REDDY said that this was a very important question and could not be disposed of in a few minutes.

The PRESIDENT stated that with a view to saving the time of the House, the Secretary to Government in the Public Works Department would make a statement on the case.

Mr. K. CHENGALARAYA REDDY wanted that, before that statement was made, members should be given an

opportunity of expressing their opinions on the basis of information secured by way of replies to questions on some of the previous days.

The member then took up the subject-matter of the representation before the House. He said that Mr. P. V. K. Murthy was a very competent official of the Electrical Department. But due to certain special circumstances, he had committed suicide in the prime of his youth. Possibly, if a smaller man had put an end to his life, the incident might not have come to the notice of so many members. The individual in question had just before committing suicide, written two letters. Both of them had been referred to in the inquest report also. The reasons adduced by him for putting an end to his own life, as stated in those letters, were public reasons. Names of many officers of Government had also been mentioned in them. It transpired from those letters that some high-placed officers including the then Dewan and Sir Harold Colam were in favour of Mr. Murthy's appointment as Electrical Inspector, with instructions to discharge the duties assigned to him without fear or favour. There was evidence to show that he had discharged his duties in accordance with those very instructions. He also performed other duties which were not at all mentioned in the Government Order relating to his appointment. That was rendered possible by the encouragement that was specially afforded to him by his superior officers. The information before the member confirmed in a way by the two letters left by Mr. Murthy was that the reports made by him were sent to the departmental officers for enquiry. With reference to that procedure Mr. Murthy had written to the effect that though he was not prepared to discharge certain duties, the higher officers forced him to discharge them. But when he made reports based upon discoveries made by him in the exercise of such duties, they were referred to the departmental officer. That was the reason why Mr. Murthy feared that ultimately he was likely to be sent back for work under the very officer against whom he had submitted some reports to Government. But that was not all. Just a day prior to the tragedy, Mr. Murthy was summoned to a meeting attended by the Minister in charge, the Secretary to Government and some others. What all happened at that meeting was not known to the speaker but it was stated that hot words were exchanged between some of those present and some others. The speaker had reason to think that Mr. Murthy was taunted that he had too much wind in his head and required to be pulled up. When Government officers had encouraged him to do certain unpopular duties, when he was actually in the course of performing such duties and when the current was flowing in a particular direction, the Government had switched off the main. They had turned the current in an opposite direction. They had proposed to reduce Mr. Murthy's status, and to post him back as a subordinate of that very officer against whom he had made reports. That was the reason why more than one member had tried to have the two letters of Mr. Murthy read out to the House. Government no doubt promised to do so but that promise had still to be fulfilled. The speaker therefore ventured to read a few sentences from a letter which Mr. Murthy had written to Sir Harold Colam, according to some newspaper reports, which were as follows :—

"On the day you asked me to work for Government I told you that I would be dislodged by Mr. Forbes if the Government let me down. You told me that I must be considered as a coward and unworthy of holding the place if I did not fight for anything right. I fought relentlessly. Now I am placed under Mr. Forbes. I was assured that these reports would be torn off and thrown into the waste paper basket and that I must say everything to eradicate bad things in the department. All that, I did to serve you and Sir Mirza . . . . ".

In another letter Mr. Murthy wrote :

"Life is not worth existing under such continuous mental strain. Government dragged me into the tangle of an unconquerable enemy. I refused to be so dragged but I was forced. Now that very Government becomes the judge and condemns me without my knowing why."

Mr. K. CHENGALARAYA REDDY observed that this last sentence amounted to a charge against the Government. Government had not told the House

what exactly was the verdict returned after the police enquiry. They merely said that Mr. Murthy had committed suicide. But the question remained why he had done it. After all, he was a Government officer and the fact remained that he had not committed suicide for private reasons. The tragedy had taken place in connection with departmental irregularities. The speaker wished to know whether Sir Harold Colam was present at the time of the police inquest and if so, whether he was examined. Did the police try to ascertain the truth or otherwise of the allegations contained in the two letters of Mr. Murthy?

The Dewan-President had been pleased to observe that nobody could do anything if a neurotic chose to commit suicide. That, the speaker felt, was too cold a remark and it was a remark which had shocked a good many members of the House. If anybody could establish that neurotic was Mr. Murthy's condition when he committed suicide, members would never bother themselves about the matter. Actually however that was not the case and so it was that the representation was now before the House so that in order to clear all doubts and apprehensions on the part of the public, a committee must be appointed. He also urged that the report to be submitted by such committee should be published. He hoped that Government would be good enough to accept the representation.

The SECRETARY to GOVERNMENT PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT (Mr. M. G. Mehkri) observed that even though this question had been discussed often at this very session, he would try to explain everything relating to the present representation without keeping back any information which the House would like to have. Mr. P.V. K. Murthy, he said, was first appointed Electrical Inspector for one year on an experimental basis. At that time, the question whether the appointment was to continue or not had been definitely reserved for later consideration. Before committing suicide Mr. Murthy had definitely known that he would have to be prepared for a change of work. It was not true that if he went back to the department, his grade would have been reduced or that he would be subjected to any sort of a disgrace. It would have been merely a case of change of place and change of work, a thing which was not peculiar in the case of any Government officer. Mr. Murthy would have merely gone back to the department from which he had come. If he thought that Sir Harold Colam or Sir Mirza Ismail had specially encouraged him to do certain things but had subsequently let him down, he was altogether mistaken and Government could not be held responsible for such impressions on his part.

The reason why Mr. Murthy had committed suicide need not, the speaker said, be gone into on the present occasion. Suffice it to say for the present that Mr. Murthy must have thought that he had not been given sufficient independence to do things as he liked. Whatever freedom of action was called for had really been given to him. That would be clear from the fact that he was asked to submit to Government reports independently of the head of the Electrical Department. So far as the Assembly was concerned, it should also consider whether there was anything wrong on the part of Government to ask for an explanation from any officer against whom complaints might have been received. In the case in question Mr. Murthy had made certain complaints against Mr. Forbes. So the Government sent the papers to Mr. Forbes in order that the latter might submit his explanation. If Mr. Murthy thought that Mr. Forbes was his enemy and that therefore, in sending the papers to Mr. Forbes, Government had let down Mr. Murthy, Government could certainly not hold themselves responsible for such an opinion on the part of Mr. Murthy. As a matter of fact, on the basis of Mr. Murthy's reports, Government had told Mr. Forbes more than once that particular irregularities which had come to notice must be set right by him. Government, like a judge, were meant to hear both sides of a case and do things in the best

manner possible in public interests. That exactly was what Government had done in the present case.

In conclusion **Mr. MEHKRI** referred to the unfortunate fact that only a few weeks prior to the tragedy in question, Mr. Murthy's wife also had died of tuberculosis. Coupled with that unfortunate event, the expected reversion to the Electrical Department must probably have acted on Mr. Murthy's mind. That, honestly, was the conclusion at which Government had arrived after a consideration of all aspects of the question. It seemed unnecessary therefore to appoint a committee to carry on any fresh investigation as proposed.

The House rose for lunch at 3-7 p. m. and reassembled at 3-40 p. m.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

Disorderly behaviour of Members of Military Forces.

The adjournment motion of which notice had been given by **Mr. Bhupalam R. CHANDRASEKHARAYYA** was taken up. The motion was to the following effect:—

"That the business of the House do adjourn to discuss a definite matter of recent occurrence and urgent public importance to wit: the growing instances in and around Bangalore, of disorderly behaviour on the part of members of military forces, resulting in clashes between themselves and the residents of villages, as in Dodda Bommasandra on the 12th October 1941."

In placing this motion before the House, **Mr. Bhupalam R. CHANDRASEKHARAYYA** stated that instances of disorderly behaviour had been reported in a particular issue of the *Visvakarnataka* and that he was not a little disturbed to read that report. According to that paper, in the course of the incident complained of, the shanbhog of the village had been beaten by the sepoys and when people rushed into their houses and shut the doors thereof, the sepoys were reported to have broke the doors open and forced themselves into the houses.

It was not only one instance of disorderly behaviour that the speaker wanted to bring to notice. Only the previous day two more incidents were reported to have taken place in Ranasingpet of Bangalore City and near the Central Market and it was stated that all the members of military forces who were responsible for the incidents had been taken by the police to the station and subsequently sent to their camp. A certain gentleman who had just gone to Mysore from Bangalore had told the speaker that in Chamarajpet and in Malleswaram, incidents of the kind mentioned were taking place and they only showed that the sepoys were exceeding reasonable bounds. It was stated that when some of the incidents were happening, the residents of the concerned localities had appealed to the police to interfere and control the situation but that the police had stated that they were unable to do so, and suggested that anybody wishing to do so might seek necessary relief from the courts of law. For that reason, he said, the residents were really afraid of the sepoys now stationed at Bangalore and some really apprehended whether the Mysore Police and the Mysore Government were not prepared to take any action to keep the military forces now stationed at Bangalore under check. It was reported that all those that had created so much trouble in Dodda Bommasandra were members of a certain regiment from Travancore. They might be subjects of that or any other administration, but as members of the military force, they were certainly subject to full control of the British Government and, being stationed for the time being within the limits of Mysore State, the Government of Mysore also must be deemed to have sufficient power to deal with them and yet, because incidents of the kind were going on, people were tempted to suspect that the Government of Mysore might not have the boldness to proceed against the sepoys as the Government of India had supreme command over them. It might be that such an impression on the people's part was altogether erroneous. At any rate, it appeared to be the duty of the Government to take effective action to prevent a repetition of such incidents. It appeared to the speaker that unless the

police took immediate drastic action in such cases and unless the Government declared certain places as out of bounds for the military people—by putting up boards to that effect in all important places—such incidents could not be prevented. He believed that the local press also had not rushed to report the cases without mature thought, and the incidents reported were themselves many. The Municipal Council of Bangalore City also had brought to the notice of the Government that such things were taking place and should be prevented. The Bangalore Transport Company too were experiencing great difficulties as a result of the military forces rushing into the buses at the stands, creating scenes in the buses, etc. But whatever be the other difficulties and inconveniences, people could not tolerate misdeeds where the honour of Indian womanhood was involved. It was the foremost duty of any Government in India to safeguard the honour of women. Otherwise, if any such incident should happen again, some of the people might be roused to take the law into their own hands. The military forces in question were expected to guard the country and its honour, and even if only a few of such men misbehaved, the supreme cause, namely, war effort, might suffer. In this view he requested the Government to post Civic Guards for duty at important centres in order to guard against incidents of the kind referred to. If the Government delayed taking action as suggested, the people themselves would have to organise volunteer corps the members of which, though unarmed, would be prepared to sacrifice their lives if necessary and do all they could to deal with the miscreants. But he hoped the Government would not necessitate such things and that they would take all necessary precautionary measures at once.

Mr. M. B. GURULINGIAH seconded the motion. He said that he was also aware of one or two instances of misbehaviour on the part of some members belonging to the military force. About a fortnight earlier he had heard of a case in Malleswaram in which when an old man was going on a certain thoroughfare with his daughter, some people came by a military car and took away the lady in it. It was reported that about midnight they had left her by the road side and that she was now undergoing treatment in the hospital.

The PRESIDENT requested the member not to draw on his imagination but to state any incidents of which he had personal knowledge.

Mr. M. B. GURULINGIAH replied that he knew that the persons referred to came of a respectable family, that the lady referred to was unmarried and therefore the father of the lady was ashamed to give out the truth in public. The speaker had made personal enquiries and he knew that the incident he was referring to had taken place. He therefore appealed to the Government to see that such things did not happen in future.

Mr. A. N. RAMA RAO, who spoke in further support of the adjournment motion, brought to notice that when school children, particularly girls, were going about on public roads, a number of military lorries happened to run about and that persons sitting therein were accustomed to throw plantain peels, match boxes, flowers, etc., at those girls. It sometimes happened that the persons sitting in those lorries got down, accosted the girls and told them that they would do well to accompany them instead of going to school. The speaker was very sorry to hear reports of that kind. The lorries were running about even at odd hours so that whenever they were sighted, girls had begun to rush into the nearest available houses in quest of safety. It was also stated that in certain cases persons in military lorries cracked jokes and made indecent exposures.

The MINISTER for LAW (Rajaseva-prasakta A. V. Ramanathan) asked the member if he had direct knowledge of any such happenings.

Mr. A. N. RAMA RAO replied in the affirmative and stated that if the Minister so desired he was in a position to publish names of the aggrieved parties.

Mr. A. V. RAMANATHAN said that that was not very necessary. The

Deputy Commissioner and District Magistrate of Bangalore himself was a resident of Malleswaram so that the parties mentioned might easily go and give the names to him.

Mr. A. N. RAMA RAO stated that it would be difficult for each party to go and complain to the District Magistrate and to substantiate the charge that some persons knocked at the doors, made indecent exposures, etc.

Mr. A. V. RAMANATHAN observed that it was the duty of everybody to promptly report such things to the District Magistrate.

Mr. A. N. RAMA RAO then brought to notice that members of the military forces who used to occupy seats in the city buses belonging to the Transport Company refused to pay for the tickets, creating lot of disturbance and lot of scenes on the way. He said that these were matters of which almost all the residents of Bangalore were aware. He then brought to notice that members of the military forces sometimes went to the Lal-Bagh in the afternoons and evenings and also to Chamarajpet, Visveswarapuram and Mavalli. Whenever they came across women, they used foul language and called them names.

The PRESIDENT remarked that it looked as though the member was somewhat exaggerating matters.

Mr. A N. RAMA RAO submitted that a few instances of the kind referred to had actually occurred in Mavalli.

The PRESIDENT observed that even then it would be better to refrain from generalisations.

Mr. A. N. RAMA RAO thanked the Dewan for that advice. Proceeding, he agreed that Government had their own difficulties in a matter of this kind. If the military forces in question had belonged to the Government of Mysore, they could have controlled the members thereof by issuing necessary orders or meting out suitable punishments. But the particular case in question involved the relationship between the local Government and the Imperial Government. The speaker was not aware of the understanding subsisting between the two Governments in matters of this kind. He was also not aware of the degree of control that the Government of Mysore was in a position to exercise over the military forces or the amount of influence they could bring to bear on military authorities. In any case he was anxious that the Government should take immediate action to put an end to the incidents of the kind under reference.

He agreed that the limits in the city beyond which members of the military forces should not be permitted to go, should be clearly defined and that effective action should be taken to see that those members did not transgress those limits. In particular, they should do everything necessary to safeguard the honour of women. He referred to this aspect of the question with a certain amount of feeling because in a number of places like Dodda Bommasandra, Thippagondanahalli, Peenya, etc., several objectionable acts were being perpetrated by members of the military forces.

Another MEMBER referred to a case in which certain sepoys returning from a cinema engaged a taxi from the Cantonment to the Training and Prisoners of War Camps. They had insisted on driving the taxi themselves and in so doing dashed the taxi against an electric lamp post.

Mrs. W. H. THEOBALD spoke as follows :—" Sir, it is very deplorable that these things have been happening. It is not necessary that we go into details in this House about what took place elsewhere. I am afraid that women are being exposed to humiliation. So I would ask you to appeal to the Colonel or the General Officer Commanding and ask him to put the whole of the City out of bounds and protect our Indian women there. I think we had better close the discussion as it reflects on women in general. They are not to blame for what took place, and to discuss matters of this type in this House does not seem to be proper. So if you do not mind, may we stop the discussions here and just apply the remedy by asking the General Officer Commanding to put the whole of the City and the surrounding villages out of bounds ?"

Mr. V. VENKATAPPA thanked Mr. Bhupalam R. Chandrasekharayya for

so promptly moving this adjournment motion. Everybody realised that the incidents complained of should not have occurred. If such things were allowed to take place, it was not difficult to imagine the serious consequences that would follow. It was therefore necessary for Government to do everything they could to prevent such happenings. Government were doubtless aware of similar incidents which had taken place in Bombay and the consequences that had followed such incidents. It would not be true to say that the difficulties brought to notice by some of the previous members were peculiar to women in and around Bangalore. Particular points had been referred to merely with a view to bringing to the notice of Government the gravity of the present situation. The citizens of Bangalore and residents of the surrounding villages were all unarmed people. Members of the Military forces, on the other hand, were all armed. These latter were also prepared for the worst. The law-abiding private citizens could not be expected to deal with situations of that kind. It was therefore the first duty of the Government to do all they could to put an end to such an ugly state of affairs. Incidents of the kind reported had already created a scare in the country, and rage in the minds of citizens, and unless such incidents were stopped forthwith, the citizens would have always to live in a state of panic. He hoped that Government would see that such a situation did not actually arise.

Mr. SHEIK AHMED SAHIB stated that on the Bangalore-Doddaballapur road the number of buses plying every day was very large and that the same road was also made use of by any number of military lorries. The lorries were driven by drivers who were not well trained. For that reason, at the sight of a military lorry, buses conveying passengers would stop on a side of the road. In spite of it, one day, a military lorry dashed against a boy and he died on the spot. The body was taken away to Bangalore in the same lorry and the parents who were not aware of it vainly searched for the boy in so many places. It was reported later on that the body had been buried somewhere, but the police did not know it at all, and the parents were also not compensated for the loss of their son. Such things might have happened elsewhere also. The Italian prisoners stationed at the camp were not responsible for trouble of that kind. It was only those who had been brought to Bangalore for training from other parts of the country who were responsible for all the trouble. And due to their misbehaviour it had become difficult for residents of Bangalore and the surrounding places to get their daily supplies of milk, curds, etc. The villagers supplying those articles were now afraid to go to the cities. Unless the position was brought under complete control, a day might come when citizens of Bangalore could not secure their supplies at all. It was therefore the urgent duty of the Government to secure the peace and safety of their subjects.

Mr. B. NARAYANASWAMAPPA, a resident of Yeswantpur, said that he also was personally aware of certain instances of misbehaviour on the part of members of the military troops stationed at Bangalore. In one case, he said, a shanbhog was writing out a report or *mahazar* in connection with a case of drowning in the Kodigehalli Tank. By that time some members of the military troops had misbehaved in Dodda Bommasandra and the villagers had caught hold of one of them. The other members rushed to the shanbhog and simply beat him. In the evening the villagers were proposing to lodge a complaint against them, but about 20 sepoys came to the village and beat every one they came across. A resident of Govindayyanapalya happened to visit the village at the time and he also was beat by a sepoy. It was not known whether that villager was now living at all. The sepoy also pulled out window bars in many houses and created lot of difficulty and embarrassment to the people.

Mr. A. V. RAMANATHAN asked whether the member was repeating what he had merely heard or he had himself seen the incidents he was mentioning.

Mr. B. NARAYANASWAMAPPA replied that he was an eye-witness to the incidents. As he owned lands in the

village under reference he had gone there on the day in question and had the misfortune to see all those things.

He then brought to notice that of late the local authorities were insisting that every one making use of the road between Yeswantpur and Dodda Bommasandra should obtain special permits and represented that that was causing considerable hardship to the public.

He also referred to a recent rumour that the hamlet known as Dewanarapalya was soon to be evacuated and requested that Government should not issue orders to that effect as they would render 40 to 50 families homeless thereby.

The PRESIDENT stated that that was a different matter, being quite unconnected with the incidents to which reference had been made.

Mr. B. NARAYANASWAMAPPA then referred to certain fatal accidents after which a military officer visited the spot and remarked why such a howl should have been raised if one or two persons died at a time when thousands of lives were being lost every day on the battlefields.

The speaker then stated that hundreds of people from the Training Camp were daily visiting the drink shop at Yeswantpur and represented that they were a source of considerable nuisance to the local residents. The police felt helpless to control them.

With regard to women, the speaker said that there were 10 or 12 instances in which certain things which he could not mention on the floor of the House had actually happened. He would have no objection to furnish details privately if required to do so.

The PRESIDENT observed that it would be enough if facts were mentioned in general terms.

The MEMBER then requested that all inhabited and busy areas must be declared as out of bounds for troops. He concluded with a note of despair that sometimes the villagers felt that there was none to take care of them and appealed to Government to take drastic remedies against incidents of the kind reported already.

Srimathi PUTTAMMA said that a state of utter despair prevailed at present in Kodigehalli, Chikka Bommasandra, Dodda Bommasandra, Tindlu and other villages round about Bangalore, and women from those villages could not venture to go to Bangalore either for selling milk and curds or on other business. They could not also attend the weekly shandies in near-by major villages for selling and purchasing what they had and what they needed so that life had become indeed difficult for them. She represented that women venturing to go on unavoidable business were being asked by sepoys to go with them and that two or three women had actually been taken hold of by them. Such an intolerable state of affairs prevailed, she said, for about five or six months now so that, in some villages, even males including shanbhogs were unable freely to move about.

Another MEMBER stated that the nuisance and trouble caused by members of military forces were not confined to Bangalore and its surroundings, but were noticeable in all places along the Bangalore-Bellary Road.

Lokasevaniratha Bale SIDDALINGA SETTY observed that members of the House were shocked to hear of the incidents mentioned in this connection. If they should be represented to Government by responsible members of a constitutional House like the Assembly, it was clear that the position of residents of the concerned places should be something intolerable. He therefore requested the Government to take up the matter with the Hon'ble the British Resident in Mysore and see that immediate steps were taken to get the situation well in hand.

The PRESIDENT asked whether the member personally knew anything that had a bearing on the motion before the House.

Mr. Bale SIDDALINGA SETTY answered in the negative, but he added that what they were hearing was sufficient to make one realize that the situation indeed looked grave.

Mr. MIRZA AZEEZULLA BEIG agreed that the position at present was unusually difficult and that Government should take some effective action to improve it. He referred in particular

to the nuisance resulting from a very large number of military lorries passing along daily even in the busiest and most congested parts of Bangalore City and at odd hours, and stated that in addition to being a nuisance this was causing a lot of anxiety also to the residents since the drivers were often reckless and rash. The lorries themselves ran sometimes empty, and sometimes when they were full, considerable mischief was being committed by the occupants. They would be often drunk and not conscious of what they themselves were doing. They were certainly a source of danger to women and children particularly and it was therefore necessary to restrict lorry movements to less congested routes and to prohibit them from entering the city limits altogether.

Mr. K. NANJUNDA RAO said that incidents of the kind mentioned in this discussion would disturb and enrage even the meekest of persons. A noble soul like Mahatma Gandhi had employed very strong language in condemning the incidents which had occurred in Bombay, in which sepoys had molested or maltreated innocent women minding their own business. "What are all the Hindus, Mussalmans, the Governor and the Viceroy doing," the Mahatma wondered, "when such shameful things are happening under their very nose?" The speaker hoped that at least in Mysore the authorities would take prompt action to prevent and put down such occurrences.

Mr. A. V. RAMANATHAN said that he heard with rapt attention the remarks made by all the members who had so far spoken. He stated that except the article which had appeared in the *Visvakarnataka*, Government were aware of every act of nuisance committed or misdeeds perpetrated by members of the military forces stationed at the Training and Prisoners of War Camps at Bangalore. They were also aware of the resolutions passed by the Bangalore City Municipal Council. Having been away at Mysore for some time, the speaker said, that as soon as he had heard of some of the incidents, he had telephoned to the Deputy Commissioner and issued orders to the effect that proper arrangements should be made to control the situation.

But the speaker would like to make one statement in this connection and that would help the House to see why he had tried to correct Mr. Gurulingiah when he was submitting his remarks. According to information before the Government, in one case, an old lady was pursued and disturbed by some sepoys who, however, could not be caught so that, in that case, no action could be taken against them. The question was however taken up with the Commanding Officer. That officer wrote to Government on the 25th of September that proper arrangements had been made to see that such things did not recur. It was in that same connection also that the incident referred to by Mr. A. N. Rama Rao had occurred, *viz.*, that some school girls were given trouble, and so on. That incident also had been enquired into. The complaint about the difficulties caused to buses belonging to the Bangalore Transport Company also were similarly enquired into. But the Deputy Commissioner had reported that enquiries were made and the allegations were not proved. However, instructions had been issued that additional police should be posted for controlling traffic and minimising the inconvenience to the travelling public.

With regard to the particular incidents mentioned in the motion also, enquiries were made and it was found that the report published in the *Visvakarnataka* was substantially correct. It was true that one particular sepoy attempted to give trouble to some people. At the same time nothing had happened which need give rise to a scare. The people who happened to be present at the spot caught hold of the miscreant. They proposed to hand him over to the police, but others rushed to his help and rescued him. Some people were wounded by them. In that connection the police had registered a complaint and investigation was going on. A telephone message had just been received that additional police had been posted for duty in the concerned village and that

people were now free to attend to their avocations without any fear.

There was no doubt that if women were molested and peaceful life was endangered, feelings would be roused and people would be disturbed, grieved and enraged. Personally he felt that one good had resulted from the incident; for, in this way, at least, they would think more about the war, realize the situation created by the war and become alive to the present needs, so that war effort would be speeded up. He would appeal to the people to participate in war effort more and more effectively so that the war might end soon and incidents like these might no longer be possible. There was much for the public to do in the direction of war effort. That did not mean that Government would overlook the misdeeds of the individuals in question. So far as Government were concerned, they would also do all they could to put an end to incidents now complained of.

Other minor incidents also had been referred to by some of the speakers. The speaker was not in town on the day on which one of them had occurred, but the Dewan had taken effective action, had sent for all the concerned officers, and discussed with them and had arranged that busy parts of the city like Avenue Road, Chikpet, etc., be declared out of bounds for troops. In Malleswaram there was some disturbance, and it was ordered that military lorries should no longer obtain their petrol supplies from the bunk in Malleswaram. The Venkatarangaiengar Road as well as certain other roads had also been declared out of bounds for troops. On 25th September again, some other roads were declared out of bounds. All the same, it would not be possible to order that even lorries should not go by any of the roads in city limits. It was also not feasible to order that only well-trained drivers should be permitted to drive those lorries; for, the lorries were being used to train drivers. Therefore, a certain amount of inconvenience to the public was inevitable at a time like the present and members of the public should be prepared to put up with it, though everybody agreed that the inconvenience should be such as not to occasion serious consequences. Government would certainly see that such consequences would not arise.

It was with that object, **the MINISTER** proceeded to say, that Government had gone the extent of considering whether the whole of the city could not be declared out of bounds; but it was found that that was not possible.

All things considered, **the MINISTER** explained that one solution might lie as in the last war, in arranging patrol by 'Regimental Police.' Government would enquire if the same could be arranged. They would also see if motor-cycle police could be deputed. The feasibility of a proposal like that had yet to be examined. He had made a note of it and would go into it soon after going back to headquarters.

One member had spoken words of despair and said that people sometimes felt utterly helpless. With reference to that, **the MINISTER** said that there was absolutely no warrant for any such feeling. After all, the civil jurisdiction over all persons residing in the State continued to vest with the Government of Mysore, and nobody who misbehaved could hope to go scot-free. It was only in cases where the military authorities wanted to court-martial particular offenders that these would be handed over to the military authorities. Members might therefore rest content that all wrong-doers, wherever and whoever they were, would be brought to book by Government.

Before concluding, **the MINISTER** observed that there was only one aspect of the question under discussion which had caused him great pain and greater grief, and that was that his own countrymen, *viz.*, Travancoreans, should have made themselves open to the charge of misbehaviour. That was a matter at which every Indian would feel ashamed.

In conclusion, he hoped that members would take a comprehensive view of the effects of war and, apart from the particular unhappy incidents in question, see that there were also some countervailing advantages that had

accrued in favour of Bangalore and the villages surrounding it, such as that vegetables and certain other commodities of local growth were very much in demand and were therefore yielding higher prices to the growers than before. The incidents themselves were regrettable and as already explained, Government had taken, and would continue to take, all the steps necessary to see that the life and activities of peace-loving subjects were not interfered with and endangered on any account.

Mr. Bhupalam R. CHANDRASEKHARAYYA said, with reference to the Minister's grief that Indian troops should have laid themselves open to the charge of misbehaviour, that Mysore troops also were on duty abroad, but never had earned such ill-repute. Mysore troops, on the other hand, had enhanced the reputation of their State. The speaker wished and prayed that other Indian sepoys also emulated their example and thereby added to the glory of India as a whole. He also wished success to the proposed scheme of constituting regimental police. He agreed with all those who wished that Nazism should be put an end to. But he also wished that Nazism was not perpetrated by those very persons who were out to kill it. That was the only object with which the motion before the House had been moved.

In conclusion, he referred to the other steps which, according to the Minister, Government had taken and were proposing to take. In enforcing those measures it would be desirable that the Government were assured of the hearty support of the elected representatives of the people. As a means of securing such assurance, the speaker suggested, that the President might kindly record the vote of the House on the motion under discussion.

Mr. A. V. RAMANATHAN asked whether that was really necessary.

Mr. Bhupalam R. CHANDRASEKHARAYYA, however, pressed the motion to a division.

The motion was thereupon put to vote and passed unanimously.

The House adjourned at 4-25 p.m. to meet again at 8 a.m., on the following day.